

APPROACHES TO HISTORICAL TYPOLOGY OF MORPHOSYNTAX
PAST AND PRESENT

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The terms figuring in the title of the paper need clarification. "Typology" is used in its broad sense including the study of types, general or universal grammar, the type of language and typological characterization, but the study of types and typological characterization will be relevant in most approaches to historical grammar in both the historical and comparative aspects. "Morphosyntax" includes a wide range of linguistic phenomena from some relevant problems of morphophonemics to the order of meaningful elements /cf. Coseriu 1983, 270/.

In the 19th century the empirical base of linguistics and especially that of grammatical typology consisted of information on morphology, especially on paradigms and their function in the sentence. In this century information available on syntax has been greatly increased but the aspects of its presentation are far less uniform than is the case with morphology. Thus even at present, morphosyntax remains the most reliable source for typological research. In the last decades grammatical theory and typology have been oriented to syntax and questions of morphology have been far less studied. The questions of morphosyntax should be reconsidered in the context of present-day typology. Before or parallel to this we should look back at the history of research in order to use the lesson in the present and in planning the future.

At present, in our work on the computer base of the project "Encyclopedia of the Languages of the World", we have an enormous amount of reliable information on morphology and

morphosyntax which can be and will be generalized in a structural-functional approach. The information "beyond" morphosyntax is far less complete and systematic. This is true not only in synchronic but also in diachronic aspect. In order to meet the challenge presented by the information at our disposal, I turned to the past to learn its lesson.

Here, I can present only some views of six scholars from the 30-ies of the 19th century up to the 80-ies of this century. I selected only one monograph from each of them /for details see Dezső 1987/.

Humboldt's Kavi -- work

First, I shall comment on Humboldt's Kavi -- work /after the German Kavi -- Werk/: Über die Kavi-Sprache auf der Insel Jawa nebst einer Einleitung über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts. /I. Band 1836, II. Band 1838, III. Band 1839/. The independence and importance of the introduction is indicated in the title. Thus, the separate publication of the introduction is justified. The study of the introduction without regard to the rest of the Kavi -- work is less acceptable. The "Verschiedenheit" gives a final shape to Humboldt's theory of language and his typology, and can, therefore, be treated separately. Still it is a part of the Kavi-work which illustrates the application of the author's approach to language and civilization on the material of Malay-Polinese languages and the civilization of Java. Humboldt's views, exposed in an abstract way with philosophical implications in the introduction, become clearer in their application. From the point of view of the Kavi-work, which is the topic of our discussion, the introduction must be considered as its integral part. Humboldt does not repeat his typological statements in the rest of the work, but he applies

them in the description of Kavi and Javanese and in the comparison of Malay-Polinese languages.

The first book /Buch/ deals with the historical, cultural, and especially religious contacts between India and Jawa /1--312 of the first volume/. In the second and third volumes Humboldt studies Kavi /the second book: 1--206/, and the Malay-Polinese language group /the second and third book: 205--1028/. A big part of the third book was written by Buschmann /from page 569/. The study of Kavi and of the Malay-Polinese languages, probably, had a considerable effect on the development and final shaping of Humboldt's theory. This possibility, as well as the fact that Humboldt was the founder of Malay-Polinese comparative linguistics, is usually not considered. This group of languages required the modification of comparative methodology applied by Humboldt's contemporaries to the ancient Indo-European languages. Javanese was the only language the earlier stage of which was known in Kavi /10--13 centuries/. The role of structural comparison accompanied with etymological observations was in the foreground. In the Kavi-work genetic and typological comparison are interwoven. This has become one of the major features of the diachronic research in morphosyntax during its whole history up until today.

A.S. Teselkin characterizes Humboldt's work from the point of view of the history of Kavi studies: "As a matter of fact this was the first scholarly work on Kavi language. When characterizing grammar, Humboldt demonstrated its similarity to that of Modern Javanese. In this respect, Humboldt considered it possible to explain the grammatical phenomena of Kavi from the point of view of Modern Javanese. For the grammatical study only the text of the "Brata Yuddha" was at his disposal. Humboldt was aware of the fact that the grammatical structure of this poetic work could differ from that of prosaic texts... The description of Kavi was only a part of a more important

task: the general characterization of Malay-Polinese group of languages. Therefore, the author did not focus his attention on the peculiarities of Kavi. On the contrary, he concentrated on the discovery of general features of the Malay-Polinese group." /Teselkin 1963:14, 15/.

I should add that Humboldt's views on grammatical typology are reflected in the description of Kavi and in its comparison to other languages. This is apparent in the careful study of verbal predicate and its role in the sentence which was an important aspect of Humboldt's theory /cf. Ramat 1973/. In his comparative approach Humboldt starts with the synchronic description of the oldest attested language, compares it with its modern variant and proceeds to closely and distantly related languages. The study of language was based on the profound presentation of culture and civilization. This was necessary in the case of Kavi because of the dominance of Sanskrit elements in vocabulary and the preservation of Malay grammatical structure. Humboldt described the facts which explained the impact of civilization on vocabulary. In the Kavi-work there appears an important aspect of the study of the relationship between language and society. The introduction formulates it in an abstract philosophical way, which gave rise to different interpretations, among them to metaphysical speculations, and that the solid concrete study of the relationship between Kavi and the Javanese society had been forgotten.

Potebnja's "From Notes on Russian Grammar"

Potebnja was little known in his lifetime but now he is the classic most quoted in the Soviet typology and grammatical theory. At the beginning, Humboldt and Steinthal had an important influence on his views, later he worked out his

own approach and applied it in historical linguistics. The philosophical background of contemporary Russia and the specific topic, theoretically and typologically oriented study of Russian and Slavonic grammar, shaped his original approach.

His major work, the four-volume "From Notes on Russian Grammar" is not a canonic historical grammar of the pre-neo-grammarians time. In the first two volumes /published 1874, second edition 1889 which is usually referred to/ the author analyzes the fundamental issues of grammar, especially the relationship between the parts of the sentence and the parts of speech and then he turns to the problems of Slavic historical grammar, as the only reliable source, for historical evidence. In volume 3 he studies the development of nouns and adjectives and in volume 4 the problems of the verb are treated /cf. Potebnja I--IV/. At that time, in the 70-ies and 80-ies of the 19th century, the basic questions of both descriptive and historical grammar were formulated in a peculiar way as the primacy of the verb or of the noun in the evolution of the human language. There were different proposals in favour of one or the other part of speech supported usually with nonsystematized data and speculations. The questions behind them were real. Potebnja posited them as the relationship between the parts of sentence and parts of speech. Although he made some use of the data of child language, he transferred the problem into the study of historical grammar. The predicate became the centre of analysis and he tried to establish the mutual relationship between syntax and morphology and their categories. His discoveries in Slavic grammar are mostly reliable even today. V.I. Borkovskij compared Potebnja's results with those of the recent investigations and Potebnja's statements concerning the evolution of adverbs, denominal adjectives, deverbal adverbs from participles, the formation of impersonal sentences and of hypotaxis were correct /cf. Borkovskij's introduction to Potebnja III/.

In summarizing Potebnja's contribution to historical morphosyntax, the historical characterization of concrete languages should be emphasized. Humboldt characterized an ancient state of a language, Potebnja completed the description of Old Russian with its development to Modern Russian. This was a general trend in comparative historical linguistics but Potebnja considered the theoretical and typological aspect as well. The empirical base of his studies was limited to the Indo-European languages with excursions to other language families.

The next linguist had at his disposal the more or less reliable descriptions of a big number of very different languages and hence the possibility of making typology.

Winkler's Sprachgeschichte

H. Winkler had published two books on Uralic and Altaic languages before his major contribution to historical typology: *Zur Sprachgeschichte. Nomen, Verbum und Satz. Antikritik* /Winkler 1887/ and: *Weiteres zur Sprachgeschichte. Formlose Sprachen. Entgegnung* /Winkler 1889/. He was relatively competent in Uralic and Altaic historical linguistics and the knowledge of the ancient Indo-European languages was a part of his linguistic education, but the history of their later development was only partially considered in his work.

His Sprachgeschichte is introduced by the comparison of Indo-European and Uralic-Altaic verbal predicate and of the cases of subject, object, the dative and the adnominal cases /2--17/. Here he formulates the basic problems which will be studied on the material of many languages. Then the first part deals with the verbal predicate /30--120/, the second studies the cases of subject, object, the dative and the adnominal cases /121--274/. The problem of grammatical gender

is formulated at the end of the book and examined in its continuation /Winkler 1889, 1--87/, the analyses of different formless languages are presented in the rest of the second book /Winkler 1889, 88--194/.

It is apparent from the content of the books that Winkler's approach to grammar has the sentence and its predicate in the centre and analyses the cases as a means of expression of the parts of sentence. The emphasis is on the morphological means, though, and Winkler needed a sentence oriented approach because he dealt with many languages without paradigms and the label "case" covers any expression of subject, object etc. Nevertheless, in the part on verbal predicate he formulates the basic of the sentence problems as those of the extension of the predicate by the basic parts of the sentence and this way they were elaborated in the part on "cases" in detail. Winkler shared the view concerning form languages and formless languages with his contemporaries. The form language distinguishes between verb and noun, its predicate is a real verb, has a real subject and object. The formless languages have formless or noun-like or half-predicative etc. verbs and hence no real subject and object. The Indo-European /Indogermanisch/ is at the top of the scale of perfectness and the rest of languages are posited on a scale. They represent the different grades of development from the point of view of an abstract historical development. The history of some of the language groups are also considered, especially of Uralic, Altaic and Indo-European. Thus, the title Sprachgeschichte is justified to some degree.

In the introduction Winkler compares the Indo-European as a group of form languages with the Uralic and Altaic languages which are formless. The major line of argumentation was presented above. In early Indo-European the agent and action are clearly distinguished in the subject and the verbal predicate while this cannot happen in Uralic and Altaic because

these languages don't differentiate a noun and a verb, more precisely their verb has nominal character /as an evidence the suffixes of determinate conjugation, identical with possessive suffixes of nouns in Hungarian, are referred to/. Thus, the Uralic and Altaic sentence is similar to a possessive construction /Winkler 1887, 2--3/. This is not true for indeterminate conjugation which shows a tendency toward predicativity according to Winkler. The Indo-European object-case expresses general, nonspecified but very close relationship between the verb and its object. The case of the object is not specified according to its definiteness /Winkler 1887, 8/. He is aware of the fact that the case of object is "dissolved" as a result of its abstract nature in the course of later development. I shall not follow Winkler's line of argumentation which proceeds to the dative and to other cases, including the elaborated system of local cases. His conclusion should be quoted: "Der höhere, umfassende Standpunkt ist auf der Seite des Indogermanischen, aber das scharfe Erfassen der tatsächlichen Verhältnisse... kann im Ural-altaischen eine Präcision und Genauigkeit bei aller oft staunenswerte Knappheit hervorrufen... die unseren Neid erregen kann" /Winkler 1887, 15--16/.

Winkler's Sprachgeschichte is far from being a reliable account of the history of human language or even of those particular branches of languages which were familiar to the author. At the same time, the author classified the facts of very different languages in a way to be considered even today. I have in mind the treatment of verbal predicates according to their morphological properties: it is based on the facts of different languages and proceeds along this line; from less "formed" languages to morphologically developed languages considering the form of predicate, subject and object. His account of the fact of ergative languages, of the role of the Bantu

noun classes in sentence deserves our attention. His comments can be disregarded.

Winkler's approach focusing on the basic constituent of sentence and his classes of predicates and sentence structure have isomorphic features with modern approaches to the typology of morphosyntax, especially with contentive typology in its early form.

Fortunatov's typology of morpho-syntax and
the characterization of Indo-European

Even this fragmentary presentation of different approaches would be incomplete without mentioning Fortunatov's contribution.

F.F. Fortunatov belonged to the neo-grammarian trend in historical grammar and was one of its best representatives. As the professor of Indo-European studies at the Moscow University he read two courses which pretend of our interest: "A course of comparative linguistics" /Fortunatov 1956, I. 23--199/ and "Comparative morphology of the Indo-European languages" /Fortunatov 1956, II. 257--426/. They were mimeographed several times but published only in the 1950s, therefore, they were available only in Russia.

Fortunatov was the founder of the "formalistic" trend in Russian linguistics. His approach can be characterized by a consistent methodology combining the analysis of form with that of meaning. It had become an integral part of morphological analyses of Russian. A great part of his "Course of comparative linguistics" is devoted to the methods of analysis which is applied to typological classification and to the characterization of Indo-European /cf. Fortunatov 1966, I. 131--181/. Fortunatov's comparative morphology of Indo-European languages is founded on the same method. He approaches grammar from morpheme to word and to the combination of words. In this respect he

differs from Potebnja and Winkler. There are no traces left from the theories and prejudices of 19th century typology. In his morphology the method of analysis implies a possible application to typology and typology is based on his method. The types are restricted to morphology but are formulated exactly as the ways of expression of words and combinations of words. The Indo-European and Slavic make use of a set of these possibilities.

The study of Indo-European and of contemporary general linguistics, including Breal's contribution to semantics, had contributed to the exactitude of Fortunatov's methodology of typological analysis which had a positive impact on the characterization of Indo-European and Slavic grammar.

Skalicka on the development of Czech declension

V. Skalicka's study on Czech declension belongs to his early writings, it was published in Czech in 1941 and became available in German only in 1979 /Skalicka 1941/1979, 126--172/. The author limits his investigation to the formal side of declension, and the problems of case and number are not examined. First he analyses the general principles of earlier studies like "the development toward simplicity" or "the equating of gender with declension", finds them simplified and dogmatic and cannot accept Trubeckoj's thesis on the "decay of declension", either. Then the author presents the development of declension from the Indo-European to Proto-Slavic and characterizes the latter in detail. The Old Czech period deserves special attention because of the great change of the vowel system which had a great impact on the form of case suffixes. In the analysis of Modern Czech, the differences between the literary language, spoken Czech and the dialects are considered.

Skalicka checks Gabelentz's idea about the spiral-like development of morphological types. According to Gabelentz the isolating type is replaced by agglutination as a result of accumulation of formal elements joining the stem. Then the elements become shortened and blurred and thus result in inflexion which disappears later. Here, a new cycle starts with a new variant of isolation. Skalicka proves that in the Western group of Indo-European languages inflexion was replaced by isolation which supports Gabelentz's theory, but in the Eastern group the period of inflection was followed by agglutination /Skalicka 1941 /1979/, 159--161/. Czech goes with the Eastern Indo-European languages in the change from inflection to agglutination which started in the time of the great vowel-shift. What has been said is true for case suffixes, and the prepositions represent the tendency toward isolation /Skalicka 1941 /1979/, 166--167/.

The analysis of the Czech declension is followed by a short overview /Ausblick, 171--172/. Here, Skalicka summarizes the general tendency of development from Indo-European to Modern Czech. The Indo-European was on the borderline between agglutination and inflection, the later development toward inflection reached its peak in Old-Czech during the great vowel shift. Then the development turned toward agglutination but the Czech is inflectional even today. Then Skalicka poses the question about the cause and reason of change of type /"Warum und wozu gehen die Sprachen von einem Typ zum anderen über: Skalicka 1941 /1979/, 171/. He finds parallels between the development of language and literature. "The peak /Akme/ of inflectional type in Czech is in the period of vowel shift. The peak of Old-Czech literature is at the same time" /Skalicka 1941 /1979/, 171/. He finds similar coincidences in the history of language and literature in Latin: the peak of inflection in the time of classical literature, and in French:



the peak of isolation in classical French. He makes the conclusion: "from the point of view of language, literature is an exponent, an avantgard of language, literature can prove what can be achieved, expressed by language in its given form" /Skalicka 1941 /1979/, 172/.

Skalicka's book was the first study in typological characterization of the historical morphology of a language corresponding to my requirements: a reliable description of historical grammar provided with typological interpretation based on a complex typology and considering the problems of language change formulated in a typologically relevant way. Potebnja's grandiose work on Russian morpho-syntax contributed very much to Russian historical linguistics, examined the basic problems of linguistic change but was not specific enough from typological aspect. Winkler's book on the history of language was typologically relevant but lacked the reliable historical presentation of development. The progress in Skalicka's study was due to the development of both historical grammar and typology, especially Skalicka's contribution to the latter. The fundamental statements of this study will reappear in a developed and specified form in his later articles on the characterization of different languages, especially on Slavic /cf. 1958 /1979/, 238--257/, and on the theoretical problems of historical linguistics /cf. 1955 /1979/, 263--281/. The relationship between language change, especially the change of type and the development of society and literature is still open. Skalicka's pupil Petr Sgall also developed this aspect in his early book "Die Entwicklung der Flexion in den Indoeuropäischen Sprachen, besonders im Tschechischen und Englischen" /Vývoj flexe v indoevropských jazycích zejména v češtině a v angličtině. Praha 1959/. At present, typologists avoid this problem because of its complexity, but this does not contribute to its solution.

In the second part of this century there have been two global or complex typologies which contributed to the study of morpho-syntax. One of them is Greenberg's word order typology applied especially to the study of Indo-European. Since it became a component of the approach to historical grammar, I shall not examine it. I will call the attention to trend in typology imitated by I.I. Meschaninov and recently labelled as contentive typology. This was a historical-typological approach to morpho-syntax from the very beginning and was associated with a simplified understanding of the link between the development of language and society which was early abandoned although the problem has been considered relevant afterwards, as well. This trend is presented in a great number of publications and this fact and lack of time allows me to present only one book which goes beyond the boundaries of the Meschaninov school.

Guxman on diachronic constants

M.M. Guxman's book Historical typology and the problem of diachronic constants /Guxman 1981/ is based on the typological studies in the history of different Indo-European, Finno-Ugric and Turkic languages and focuses on the problems of paradigms. I can present only some basic issues of the book relevant to any approach to historical typology. The subject matter of historical typology is concerned "With the discovery and study of usual /uzualnyj/ unidirectional processes which can be related... to the reorganization of features mutually dependent and structuring the type of language" /Guxman 1981, 14/. This sophisticated and carefully formulated definition is explained in the rest of the book and illustrated on rich material. The tasks of historical typology make it more specific; 1./ to study the features which are the components of typological correlations, 2./ to study the

process connected with universal categories like predicativity, attributiveness, quality, quantity, possessivity, 3./ to study the processes connected with the change of inter-level dependences, 4./ to find the possible ways of reorganization of whole system types /cf. Guxman 1981, 33/. The tasks are determined according to the definition of historical typology and proceed from the features of types via the study of universal categories to holistic types. The diachronic constants are "constructs, models generalizing the laws of language changes; they are "building materials" of historical typology,... present in his all variants: in the study of related and unrelated languages, in functional, formal-structural and contentive typologies" /Guxman 1981, 34/. The bulk of the book is devoted to the establishments of diachronic constants in the paradigmatic systems of different branches of Indo-European, Finno-Ugric and Altaic languages: in the unification of noun paradigms in Indo-European, and in the role of analytic and synthetic principles in the reshaping of paradigms, to mention only the generally known processes. Guxman finds that in the change of paradigms the major factor, determining the direction, volume and depth of historical constants /and thereby the intensity of change or conservation/ is to be found in the specificity of initial systems of the different branches of related languages /cf. Guxman 1981, 123/. The historical realization of the tendencies, programmed in the initial system, are influenced by other factors as shown in her examples.

I cannot deal with the questions of application of contentive typology in historical grammar, discussed in detail by Guxman. I refer only to her conclusion in the summary. Since contentive typology has very strong "requirements", its application presupposes the real capturing /podlinnoje pronik-

novenije/ of the "spirit of language"; at present, it is necessary" to limit ourselves to the statement of the possibility of such transformations" in the case of well studied languages /like Indo-European or Kartvelian/. The scanty data of exotic languages are insufficient /cf. Guxman 1981, 247/.

Arriving at the end of my presentation, I cannot claim that it was complete or represented the major approaches to the historical typology of morpho-syntax. I can simply say: "these linguists were my guests tonight". They studied the ancient stages of different language families. /Humboldt and Fortunatov/, the history of languages, groups of languages /Potebnja, Skalicka, Guxman/. Their studies represented the different stages in the development of historical grammar, and especially in typology. Different ideas and theories about linguistic change were present in their studies. There was a general tendency toward the formation of both historical and typologically relevant approaches to historical grammar. In the 19th century only their components were arising, in the 20th century their combination in historical-typological approaches could have been demonstrated.

Not all approaches to typology have been applied to the history of languages and not all languages can be used for the typological study of the historical morpho-syntax. I would not comment on the first fact, but the second one is worth being considered. As was shown in the paper, morpho-syntax of well studied languages has been a sound basis for typological research and only an insignificant part of the available information was generalized by typology, the rest is waiting for researchers.

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